

Securing America's Future

Dave Weldon
U.S. Representative

Dave Weldon
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Pre Sort Standard
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U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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OFFICIAL BUSINESS



Tax Relief For 2002

Nearly one year ago, the Congress passed President Bush's plan to let Americans keep more of what they have earned. We are now in year two of that tax relief plan and more tax relief is in store for this year:

Marginal Tax Rates

The new lower tax rates are fully effective for the entire tax year at 10%, 15%, 27%, 30%, 35%, and 38.6%.

Child Tax Credit

The increase from \$500 to \$600 per child that was effective last year will continue for 2002.

Death Tax Exemption

Increases to \$1 million.

Individual Retirement Account

Contribution limit increases from \$2,000 to \$3,000.

College Tuition Tax Credit

Increases from \$2,000 to \$3,000.

Education IRA Savings Account

Increases the education IRA contribution limit from \$500 to \$2,000.

Tax Relief for Educators and Teachers

Provides public and private school teachers a \$250 tax deduction for classroom purchases.



Rep. Dave Weldon holds a press conference with local Florida florist, Danny Sexton and his wife Nancy, to highlight how the death tax saddled their business with debt and why its repeal should be made permanent.

TAX
RELIEF



Securing Our Homeland

Fighting the War on Terrorism

It is critical that, in addition to our national security needs, we strengthen our homeland security. Immediately after the September 11 attacks, President Bush established the Office of Homeland Security to help our nation defend against attacks on our homeland and to respond to any such attacks. We must do all that we can to preempt attacks on Americans. While doing all that we can to prevent attacks, we must also recognize that preventing every possible attack may be impossible. We must be prepared to meet the challenges that may be presented to our nation should we suffer future terrorist attacks. A quick and effective response will save lives.

The Budget approved by the House recognizes the new reality of our world by providing over \$37 billion for homeland security. This more than doubles what was spent on homeland security prior to September 11 and recognizes the new threats against Americans. Below is an outline of some of the steps that have already been taken or that are currently underway to secure our homeland.

First Responders

- ✓ Congress and the Bush Administration have dedicated several billion dollars to equipping and training our nation's first responders — police, firefighters and emergency and medical personnel.

Enhancing Law Enforcement

- ✓ The Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS) established a new warning system for coordinating federal, state, and local law enforcement and emergency preparedness personnel.
- ✓ Numerous task forces have been created to enhance federal, state, and local law enforcement communication.
- ✓ "Operation Green Quest" has been initiated to dry up terrorist funding sources.
- ✓ Individual Americans can report suspected terrorist activities at:
<https://www.ifccfbi.gov/complaint/terrorist.asp>

Securing Our Transportation Systems

- ✓ Significantly expanded the federal Air Marshal program to secure our airlines for the more than 1.5 million Americans who fly every day.
- ✓ Thousands of additional airport passenger and baggage screeners have been hired.
- ✓ Implemented new boarding procedures for airlines and trained airline pilots and flight crews on how to prevent and respond to hijacking scenarios.
- ✓ Established new airport security access points and required additional background checks for all airport personnel.



Rep. Dave Weldon receives briefing on military rescue operations at Patrick Air Force Base.

Securing our Borders and Ports

- ✓ The House has approved legislation to provide serious reform to the INS to ensure that national security and border security are given the highest priority.
- ✓ Established new exit and entry procedures for those entering and exiting the U.S.
- ✓ Requires issuance of a student visa before a foreign student can enter the U.S.
- ✓ Reduces, from one year to six months, the maximum extension of a visa.
- ✓ New and tougher international security standards have been put in place for cargo containers.
- ✓ Provides a significant increase in funding for the U.S. Coast Guard, which is responsible for much of the security around America's ports and coastal areas.

Securing Our Food Supply

- ✓ Distributed over \$1.1 billion to help states prepare for bio-terrorist attacks.
- ✓ Acquired one billion doses of antibiotics for preparation to respond to bio-terrorism and enough doses of the smallpox vaccine to provide the vaccine to every American if needed.
- ✓ Provided \$328 million to prevent, detect, and eliminate threats to agriculture and the food supply.
- ✓ Improved the inspection of food and consumer products destined for U.S. markets.



Securing Our National Defense

Fighting the War on Terrorism



Rep. Dave Weldon visits the Pentagon to evaluate damage done by terrorists.

Defense Budget Background

Our national defense budget at the end of the Cold War in 1989 was \$303 billion. Our national defense budget did not rise above \$300 billion again until 2001. Furthermore, when you factor in inflation, the real purchasing power of a \$303 billion defense budget in 2001 is \$80 billion less than the 1989 budget. In other words, today you can buy 25% less with the same dollar, so a \$303 billion budget today is really like having a \$223 billion budget.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, some in Congress went too far in curbing defense spending. While it made sense to level off defense spending after the fall of the Soviet Union, the cuts went too deep. There was a brief increase in 1991 during the Gulf War, but spending for national security continued its decline immediately at the end of that war.

During much of the early to mid-1990s, in order to execute their missions, our Armed Forces exhausted defense stockpiles. They also cannibalized military equipment for spare parts that left aircraft and equipment inoperable. Too often our troops have been deployed without proper training or equipment. In 1995, when Republicans gained control of the House and Senate, they approved the Fiscal Year 1996 budget that began to restore funding for national defense.

Rebuilding Our National Defense

For the current year, the President and the Congress approved a defense budget that is a significant increase over 2001. But it still falls short of what is needed to properly equip, train, and field our troops. During much of the 1990s, we relied on technology developed in the 1970s and 1980s. Also, excessive deployments of troops in the 1990s put extra wear and tear on our equipment, depleted weapons and equipment



Rep. Dave Weldon re-visits the Pentagon 6 months later to survey the re-building efforts.

stockpiles, and dampened the morale of our troops who spent even more time away from their families. These budget obligations left little money to invest in the development of new advanced equipment and weaponry. These

"When we ask those in our armed forces to put themselves in harm's way for our nation, we have a moral obligation to ensure that they have the best equipment and training possible."

—Rep. Dave Weldon

investments are critical to our troops on the battlefield. Advanced equipment saves lives — their lives.

Supporting Our Troops

President Bush proposed a national defense budget that recognizes the need to devote added resources to defeat terrorism worldwide and to invest in the future so that when our troops are called upon they will dominate the battlefield.

The President's \$379 billion national security budget represents a 13% increase over 2002.

The budget increases funding for programs that have proven effective in Afghanistan. Money is set aside for the purchase of unmanned Predator and Global Hawk aircraft that has proven so successful in Afghanistan.

The budget also provides sufficient funding to support a forward deployment of 250,000 troops if needed and funding to rebuild our depleted supplies of laser guided bombs.



Securing Our Economic Future

Ensuring a Brighter Future

Social Security

Social Security is a promise that must and will be kept. When you consider both employer and employee contributions, nearly 13 percent of a working American's paycheck goes into the Social Security system. If 13 percent of our children's and grandchildren's pay is going into the Trust Fund, it is essential that it be secured for their retirement. We have a moral obligation to ensure that Social Security is there when they retire. The biggest danger to the Social Security Trust Fund is out of control federal spending.

In each of the last two years, Rep. Weldon has voted against nearly half of the 13 annual spending bills because of his objections over spending that far exceeded the rate of inflation. It is well known that for forty years—before the Republicans came into the majority—the Social Security trust fund was raided regularly to pay for out-of-control spending which led to huge deficits. The practice was stopped in 1997 when the Balance Budget Act was passed. However, this year for the first time since 1975, Senate Democrats refused to approve a budget plan, and thus there is no spending cap. Rep. Weldon is very concerned that by operating without spending restraints, the Senate will try and force Social Security Trust Fund money to be spent for larger government programs. Rep. Weldon has made it clear that he is committed to holding the line on spending in order to protect Social Security and restore our economy.

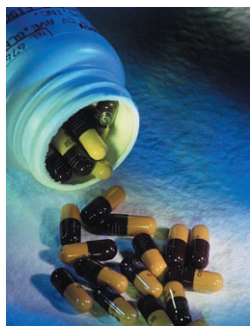
Fortunately, the House approved a budget that constrains spending and President Bush has indicated that he will veto bills that exceed the spending caps set forth in this budget. Holding the line on spending by vetoing these bills that overspend will help secure the Social Security Trust Fund.

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—Rep. Dave Weldon

Weldon Fights For Seniors' Rights

Rep. Dave Weldon again received the *Guardian of Seniors' Rights* Award from the 60 Plus Association, a non-partisan senior citizens group with more than half a million members. The *Guardian* Award is bestowed on those in Congress who have consistently voted 'senior friendly' in protecting Social Security and Medicare and for supporting Prescription Drug Benefits for seniors.



Medicare and Prescription Drugs

As a physician, Rep. Weldon knows how important prescription drugs are to senior citizens and is fully committed to enacting legislation to ensure that all senior citizens have greater access to affordable prescription drug coverage.

It is important that Congress help seniors in need of receiving these drugs while avoiding the creation of

a new, unaffordable government program. Congress must also ensure that it does not take steps that stifle the ability of drug manufacturers to continue their research and development of new lifesaving drugs. Nearly three out of every four seniors have some sort of coverage for prescription drugs. Many of them want to keep the coverage they now have through a supplemental policy or from a former employer and it is critical that they be allowed to keep such coverage. There are also

many seniors who do not have any drug expenses and they do not want to be forced to pay for a benefit they do not need.

On March 20, 2002, the House of Representatives passed a budget resolution that provides \$350 billion over the next ten years for a Medicare prescription drug plan. The resolution also provides for an average annual 6.6% growth rate in Medicare spending over each of the next five years. House Republicans have made this a top priority.

Rep. Weldon is encouraged that some pharmaceutical companies have begun to act on their own, without government involvement, and assist seniors most in need with the costs of prescription drugs. Several pharmaceutical companies have recently unveiled a private prescription drug benefit for low-income seniors for a low flat monthly fee. Other drug companies also offer prescription drug discount cards. Rep. Weldon is hopeful that other companies will follow suit.